



# MOVING WILDLIFE: HARMFUL, INEFFECTIVE, ILLEGAL

Animals are most often moved by people who are experiencing problems with wildlife or by those who think the animal would be better off somewhere else. Animals have great instincts and choose specific habitats because they can find resources they need to survive there. Never move an animal because you think it would be better off somewhere else; it can harm or stress the animal. Not only is moving wildlife illegal in Massachusetts, but it is often ineffective if you're experiencing a wildlife problem.

## RELOCATED ANIMALS:

- May try to return to their original home. Increased travel stresses and tires the animal, and puts it at a higher risk of vehicle collisions.
- Have a more difficult time finding important resources such as food, water, and shelter in an unfamiliar area. The animal will likely die if resources are hard to find or unavailable. If food, water, and shelter are available, it is likely the area is already home to other members of the same species, which will not welcome the newcomer.
- May spread disease to animals in the new area.



## IF YOU'RE HAVING A WILDLIFE PROBLEM:

- Check your property to see what might be attracting the animal. Animals will stay in an area if food or shelter are available. Eliminate potential food sources, such as garbage or bird feeders, and close off crawl spaces, as animals may use areas under porches and sheds for resting and raising young.
- Remember, moving the animal does not address the *cause* of the problem. If the cause of the problem is not addressed, it will likely reoccur. If your area is attractive to this species and you move an individual out, others will simply move in to replace it.
- If the animal has lost its fear of humans or has become accustomed to human-associated foods, moving it will transfer the problem to someone else.

## FOR MORE TIPS, VISIT [MASS.GOV/MASSWILDLIFE](https://www.mass.gov/masswildlife) OR CONTACT:

Central Wildlife District, West Boylston: (508) 835-3607  
Connecticut Valley Wildlife District, Belchertown: (413) 323-7632  
Northeast Wildlife District, Ayer: (978) 772-2145  
Southeast Wildlife District, Bourne: (508) 759-3406  
Western Wildlife District, Dalton: (413) 684-1646  
Field Headquarters, Westborough: (508) 389-6300

Photos courtesy of MassWildlife/Bill Byrne